

A.10 EDUCATION/PUBLIC OUTREACH (E/PO) PROGRAM

A.10.1 Scope of Program

The Office of Space Science (OSS) has developed a comprehensive approach for making education at all levels (with a particular emphasis on K-14 education) and the enhancement of public understanding of space science integral parts of all of its research missions and programs. To this end, OSS invites and encourages all proposers to this NRA to include an Education and Public Outreach (E/PO) component in their research proposals. In addition, anyone holding an existing multiple year research award already funded through any previous OSS NRA is encouraged to propose an E/PO supplement to their award (see details below). The two key documents that establish the basic policies and guidance for all OSS E/PO activities are a strategic plan, entitled *Partners in Education: A Strategy for Integrating Education and Public Outreach Into NASA's Space Science Programs* (March 1995), and an implementation plan, entitled *Implementing the Office of Space Science (OSS) Education/Public Outreach Strategy* (October 1996). Both of these documents may be obtained by selecting *Education and Public Outreach* from the OSS homepage at <http://spacescience.nasa.gov>, or from Dr. Jeffrey Rosendhal, Office of Space Science, Code S, NASA Headquarters, Washington, DC 20546-0001.

The following policies and guidelines apply to the E/PO activities solicited through this NRA:

- The proposed E/PO activity is expected to have general intellectual linkage to the science objectives of its “parent” proposal and/or the science expertise of its PI;
- An E/PO activity may be funded only as an add-on to a new or an existing award for a “parent” research proposal; therefore, the period of performance of the E/PO activity is restricted to that of its parent award;
- Up to \$10K per year may be proposed for an E/PO program, although larger budgets may be considered for a few exceptionally meritorious activities (Note: a Budget Summary must be submitted as part of an E/PO proposal as described further below);
- NASA requests (but does not require) that the submitting organization waive PI labor costs and its customary overhead charges on an E/PO budget, since in many cases such activities will directly aid a local educational or public science institution, and the budget available for this OSS E/PO program is extremely limited;
- The parent research proposal may identify an additional Co-Investigator who, along with the PI of the parent research proposal, will be responsible for completing the E/PO activities (e.g., an appropriately qualified colleague from the PI institution, or from an educational institution such as a public school district, science museum, planetarium, etc.);

- E/PO proposals will be evaluated (see criteria below) by appropriately qualified scientific, education, and outreach personnel, and the substance of these reviews will be conveyed to the proposers in a summary report; and
- The OSS Selecting Official will take into account proposed E/PO tasks and their review ratings when deciding on final selections and funding levels and as an aid in discriminating between highly qualified research proposals having otherwise comparable merits.

A.10.2 Evaluation Criteria

IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION

OSS has developed a document, entitled *Explanatory Guide to the NASA Office of Space Science Education and Public Outreach Evaluation Criteria*, as a resource for proposers who want to submit an E/PO proposal in conjunction with their research proposal. This *Explanatory Guide* may be accessed through the OSS homepage Web site indicated above or directly at <http://spacescience.nasa.gov/education/guide.html> ; navigation through this *Explanatory Guide* at its Web site is facilitated by internal active links. This *Guide* is not an extension of the E/PO requirements or criteria but is meant to provide an easy-to-follow introduction to this program using a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), followed by a detailed discussion of the E/PO review criteria given below. All proposers who are considering the submission of an E/PO proposal but who are not familiar with the specific OSS standards for E/PO activities are urged to review this *Explanatory Guide*.

Based on the OSS E/PO strategy and implementation plans noted above, there are two classes of evaluation criteria against which proposed E/PO activities will be evaluated. Although creativity and innovation are certainly encouraged, note that neither of these sets of criteria concerns the originality of the proposed effort. Instead, NASA seeks assurance that the proposer is personally committed to the E/PO effort and that the PI of the parent proposal and/or appropriate research team members will be actively involved in carrying out a meaningful, effective, credible, and appropriate E/PO activity; that such an activity has been planned and will be executed; and that the proposed investment of resources will make a significant contribution towards meeting stated OSS plans and objectives (interested proposers to this E/PO program are urged to consult the *Explanatory Guide* referenced above).

General Criteria

The following general criteria will be applied to the evaluation of all proposals and reflect requirements necessary for further consideration by NASA OSS of an E/PO proposal:

- The quality, scope, and realism of the proposed E/PO program including the adequacy, appropriateness, and realism of the proposed budget;

- The capabilities and commitment of the proposer and the proposer's team to carry out the proposed E/PO program, including the direct involvement of one or more science team members in overseeing and carrying out the proposed E/PO program (Note: this criterion is intended to preclude proposals that serve only to "pass through" money to an external organization or individual who would carry out the proposed E/PO activity, since such a case is inconsistent with the intention of OSS that the research community be actively involved in education and public outreach);
- The establishment or continuation of effective partnerships with institutions and/or personnel in the fields of educational and/or public outreach as the basis for and an integral element of the proposed E/PO program; and
- The appropriateness of plans for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the proposed education/outreach activity.

Specific Criteria

To ensure that the goals and objectives of the OSS E/PO strategy are realized in practice, E/PO proposals will also be evaluated using at least one of the following specific criteria, as appropriate, for the submitted proposal. Because of the modest financial scope of this program, not all E/PO proposals can (or even should) address all of these specific factors; a sound, well-posed, and focused effort that will clearly be effective in reaching its intended target audience is preferable to an unrealistically broad effort. These specific criteria are:

- For proposals dealing directly with or strongly affecting the formal education system (e.g., teacher workshops or student programs carried out at public institutions such as science museums and planetariums), the degree to which the proposed E/PO effort is aligned with and linked to nationally recognized and endorsed education reform efforts and/or reform efforts at the state or local levels;
- The degree to which the proposed E/PO effort contributes to the training, involvement, and broad understanding of science and technology by underserved and/or underutilized groups; and/or
- The potential for the proposed E/PO activity to expand its scope by having an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries (e.g., reaching relatively large audiences, being suitable for replication or broad dissemination, and/or drawing on resources beyond those directly requested in the proposal).

A.10.3 Options for E/PO Proposals

OSS expects that most E/PO proposals will be submitted by a single proposer as a supplement to a single science proposal submitted to one of the program components in this NRA. However, NASA OSS will allow two special options to this baseline pattern as discussed below (Note: as a departure from previous OSS NRA's, the so-called "Institutional" E/PO proposal option is no longer offered).

A.10.3.1 Submission of the Same E/PO Proposal with Multiple Research Proposals Submitted by the Same Proposer

OSS recognizes that a single proposer may submit more than one research proposal to different research components as defined in this NRA (see the summary cover letter and Appendix A). In such a case, that one proposer may submit the same E/PO proposal with all his/her research proposals subject to the three conditions that: (i) OSS will review such an E/PO proposal only the first time it is submitted; (ii) this one evaluation will carry through to all other submissions of that same E/PO proposal for this NRA as well as all other OSS NRA's to be issued in CY 2000; and (iii) such an E/PO proposal will be funded only once (i.e., NASA will not fund the same activity more than once even though it may be enhanced by such an increase in support). The Web page to be used for the submission of an E/PO proposal (see further below) will request information regarding the first submission and any subsequent submissions of this proposal to this NRA. Note that in such a case, the E/PO proposal must be resubmitted in the identical form as it was the first time; OSS does not have the resources to separately evaluate E/PO proposals that have only minor changes between such multiple submissions. Of course, multiple but substantially different E/PO proposals submitted by the same proposer will receive individual evaluations.

A.10.3.2 Submission of an E/PO Proposal as a Supplement to an Existing Multiple Year OSS NRA Award

In addition to PI's selected through this NRA, OSS also wants to encourage holders of existing awards to become involved in E/PO activities. Therefore, any PI of an existing multiple year award selected through any OSS NRA (including this one) having at least one year remaining in the award's period of performance may submit an E/PO proposal as a supplement to that "parent" research award. The period of performance for such a supplemental E/PO activity is limited to that of the parent research award. Such a supplemental E/PO proposal must be prepared and submitted as a stand-alone proposal following the format and guidelines given below in Section 10.5.

The deadline for the submission of such an E/PO supplemental proposal is the same month and day as the NRA through which the parent proposal was selected (if there are any questions, contact the relevant Discipline Scientist for that program component). Such supplement proposals will be reviewed using the criteria given above, and, if accepted, the E/PO funding will start on the anniversary date of the parent award.

A.10.4 Assistance for the Preparation of E/PO Proposals

To help interested proposers in developing a effective E/PO proposals, NASA OSS has established a nationwide infrastructure of space science education/outreach groups to directly aid space science investigators in identifying and developing high quality E/PO opportunities. This infrastructure provides the coordination, background, and linkages for fostering partnerships between the space science and E/PO communities, and the services needed to establish and maintain a vital national, coordinated, long-term OSS

E/PO program. The two elements of this system of particular interest to researchers interested in submitting E/PO proposals are:

- Four OSS science theme-oriented "E/PO Forums" that aid OSS in organizing the comprehensive education/outreach aspects of OSS space science missions and research programs, and provide both the space science and education communities with ready access to relevant E/PO programs and products; and
- Five regional "E/PO Broker/Facilitators" that search out and establish high leverage opportunities, arrange alliances between educators and OSS-supported scientists, and help scientists turn results from space science missions and programs into educationally-appropriate activities suitable for regional and/or national dissemination.

Prospective proposers are strongly encouraged to make use of these groups to help identify suitable E/PO opportunities and arrange appropriate partnerships and alliances but should note that the responsibility for actually developing the E/PO program and writing the proposal is that of the proposer. Points of contact and addresses for all of these E/PO Forums and Broker/Facilitators are found by opening *Education and Public Outreach* from the menu of the OSS homepage at <http://spacescience.nasa.gov> .

A.10.5 Preparation and Submission of an E/PO Proposal

To aid interested proposers in composing and submitting a complete E/PO proposal, NASA OSS has established a comprehensive electronic form that is accessed through menu on the Web site <http://www.lpi.usra.edu/panel/> . Completion of all the fields of this electronic form with the requested information and text is necessary before a proposal may be submitted for evaluation (Note: only electronically submitted E/PO proposals will be evaluated). This site may be accessed at any time up to the due date for each of the proposals as given in the cover letter of this NRA, and by using a unique identification number that will be provided at the time of first access, all fields may be edited up to final submission. The requested information may be transferred from any standard word processing software, although only text may be used to complete these fields on this Web site; i.e., this site will not accept illustrations or drawings. As an aid in developing the required information for the final electronic submission, this E/PO format may also be printed at any time.

This Web submission also requires a summary of the E/PO budget (both total and by year) using the same format shown for the research Budget Summary form shown in Appendix C.6 in this NRA. As a change from previous practice for E/PO proposals, it is no longer necessary to integrate the E/PO budget with that of its parent research proposal; however, for new proposals it is still necessary to state the summary E/PO budget (in total and by year) on the proposal *Cover Sheet* (see Section C.5.2).

Once it is submitted, the completed E/PO proposal (including all Budget Summary sheets) can then be printed out from the Web site by the proposer to provide the appropriate hard copy for submission either with their parent research proposal, or as a separate supplemental proposal if it is being submitted as an addition to an existing award (see above).

A.10.6. Reporting Activities for Approved E/PO Proposals

In order to assist OSS in obtaining a coherent picture of the entire portfolio of E/PO efforts supported across all OSS programs a brief report of selected E/PO activities are to be provided as part of the annual Progress Reports required for the parent research award (Note: it is expected that all such Progress Reports for the proposals selected through this NRA will be submitted electronically through a to-be-designated Web site). In addition, one of the OSS Education Forums (see above) will contact the PI's of selected E/PO components to obtain basic summary information concerning the nature of and intended audience for their selected E/PO effort.

A.10.7 Additional Information

General questions about this E/PO program may be directed to:

Dr. J. David Bohlin
Research Program Management Division
Code SR
Office of Space Science
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Washington DC 20546-0001
Telephone: (202) 358-0880
E-mail: david.bohlin@hq.nasa.gov

Finally, attention is also called to the Initiative to Develop Education through Astronomy and Space Science (IDEAS) program administered by the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI) on behalf of OSS. The IDEAS program is open to any space scientist based in the U.S. regardless of whether or not they hold a research grant from NASA OSS. This program, which selects proposals yearly, provides awards of up to \$40K to foster the development of innovative approaches to space science education and outreach by space scientists and their educator partners. The annual solicitation for the IDEAS program is typically released in July with proposals due in October. The annual request for proposals is posted at. Inquiries may be addressed by E-mail to IDEAS@stsci.edu or by postal mail to: IDEAS Program, Office of Public Outreach, Space Telescope Science Institute, 3700 San Martin Drive, Baltimore MD 21218.